

The Builder.

No. CCCIV.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1848.



MANCHESTER has been pointed to as the type of one grand and new idea—MACHINERY,—an idea which belongs to our own age exclusively, and is full of great results hardly yet foreshadowed. Its progress during the last seventy years has been extraordinary; and its present state is a marvel. As Lord Mahon said, at the recent meeting there, of which we gave a report last week,—It is but little more than a century ago, when the young Pretender marched through this town, and lodged at a house which was standing not many years since in Market-street. If it were possible for him to revisit these scenes, could he recognise them? Would he see any resemblance between the inconsiderable country town, as it was then, and what it has now become,—this immense capital of our manufacturing enterprise,—this vast mart of active wealth—this hive of stirring industry? What would he say to those lines of factories which have since risen on every side, affording honourable employment to hundreds of thousands of our people, and the beneficial effects of whose produce have been felt in the remotest quarters of the globe?

The speaker need not have looked so far back even as this to find a startling contrast. The Manchester of 1800 and the Manchester of 1848 are the same but in name: within that time its population has increased four-fold, and it has become the representative of a new system and new powers.

The useful has been the prevailing object in Manchester; but until very recently one of the greatest utilities, the beautiful, had received little attention. Science had been thought of more than the arts, and amongst these architecture had not received even a fair share of such small attention as was given to them. We have often pointed this out before, and have remarked on the absurdity of such neglect of the study of design as was apparent here. In another department, while thousands of pounds were being spent annually in obtaining patterns from France.

Of the architectural improvements in Manchester during the last three or four years, as well as of misdeeds, our pages contain a full and critical account,—fuller, perhaps, than is to be found in a connected form elsewhere; and it will be seen that Manchester now contains many very satisfactory edifices, and a number of rising architects preparing to do good things when the opportunities occur. There is less bad building in Manchester than in London. Brickwork is usually very well and soundly executed there, and would put to shame much of it that has been, and is being, done in and around the metropolis. It is well bonded; the mortar joints are small; and the walls are made solid throughout; moreover, the bricks used are, generally speaking, better: much of what is done in London is positively a disgrace and a danger.

There are several large works now going on. The first we stumbled upon in the course of a recent fly through the city, was a school-house of considerable size, in the course of erection, behind Dr. Hailey's new Independent

Chapel, in Cavendish-street, and in connection with it. This is being built by Hollins, under the direction of Mr. Edward Walters, architect, who also designed the new chapel. The building is two stories in height, Tudor in character, and promises to be a satisfactory structure. The size of the upper room (occupying the whole area), is no less than 123 feet long and 38 feet 6 inches wide. The roof is open, and the height from the floor to the ridge is nearly 40 feet. An extent of 20 feet at each end of the large room is divided off by an open screen, and is formed into two stories, for class-rooms, &c.; and there is an ornamental gallery along one side of the main apartment, leading from one end of it to the other. The cost of the whole is set down at 5,000*l*.

The chapel has been already described in our pages: it is Early English in style, of extensive size, and very creditable to its architect. That it has large galleries all round it is probably not his fault. The main columns separating the nave and aisles being slight, and the spandrels of the arches and the clerestory above being lofty and heavy, produce an appearance of insecurity which is somewhat striking.

The same architect has built some warehouses of superior character, particularly one near the Athenæum, the materials of which are red brick and stone: the ground story is all stone. The heads over the recesses which contain the first and second floor windows, are connected by an enwreathment at the foot of each, and made to form a good feature.

Some warehouses by Messrs. Travis and Mangnall have been already mentioned by us, and there are others by Mr. Tattershall, Mr. Holden, and Mr. Alexander Mills, which challenge attention. Very considerable sums of money are spent upon the warehouses in Manchester, and in many cases they display not only sound construction, extending to rendering them fire-proof, but good taste.

After pains had been taken, in most respects, to prevent the spread of fire, it was found in some instances that it was communicated by the "lift" used to raise the goods from one floor to another. To obviate this, Mr. Edward Bellhouse invented a fire-proof "lift," which appears well calculated to answer the purpose, and deserves to be made known to those by whom such an arrangement is needed.

We were glad to see in Mr. Bellhouse's foundry that the intention of using on the South Junction Railway, now being formed over part of the town, the under-trussed iron girders, similar to those over the Dee (the uselessness of which arrangement was demonstrated in our pages), has been abandoned: arched girders are to take their place. In one part of the line three bridges so formed come together, having each a span of 70 feet.

Iron is becoming extensively used in Manchester, and will be more so—there and elsewhere. In Market-street, not far from the Exchange, there are some new shops which are wholly faced with it, as high as the eills of the one-pair windows. The design of these, by the way, is very bad; we allude to them simply in respect of the material used.

Concerning the Exchange, just now alluded to, some of our readers will remember, that more accommodation being required than was afforded by the old building, it was a question whether to extend this or build a new one, and that after much discussion the former course was determined on, and Mr. A. W.

Mills appointed to carry it out. By this time, probably, many who helped to bring about the first part of this decision have been sorry for it. Adding and patching, especially in a building purporting to be Greek, seldom produce a good result, and certainly will not do so in the present case. This is the more to be regretted, as a large sum of money will be spent upon it. Both the exterior and interior of the building are now so far advanced that a tolerably correct idea may be formed of them, and in neither case is our impression favourable. At the extremity of the extension, or what is known as the Bank-street front, the architect has placed a large octastyle Grecian Doric portico, the proportions of which are said by the local press to be those of the portico of the Parthenon. It is not yet finished, and a decisive opinion now might be unjust; but certainly, if this statement as to the proportions be correct, there must be much to be done to what is already fixed, or, by Minerva, our vision was strangely disordered on the day in question.

The portico is joined to the main building by two circular corners, each of which has two columns and will be terminated by a quarter dome in masonry.*

The flank elevation shows a series of *arched* recesses between Doric ante, with windows in them, and having very long key-stones running up to the entablature, with the exception of a certain number at each end, where the upper part of the key-stone gives place to a small square opening for light. Semi-circular recesses over the heads of the windows are filled in with elaborately-carved panelling, which, however, although in itself clever, produces but little effect, in consequence of being but very slightly recessed and having little relief. The whole flank, it will be seen, has small connection with the Grecian Doric portico in the front.

That the new end of the building may be seen at all, the houses on one side of St. Ann's Square ought to be cleared away: at present it is quite blocked out of view. This being desirable, we saw with regret that a new building for Sir J. Haywood's Bank is being erected on this side of the square, as it will, of course, materially lessen the chance of having this improvement made. The bank is not yet far advanced, but promises to be creditable to the architect, Mr. J. Grogan. The style is Venetian, and the material stone. Attached is a residence, of brick and stone. Iron girders, of large size, are being put in for the floor over the public

* The *Guardian* says,—“The total height of the edifice is nearly 55 feet. The extension is 170 feet in length, down Exchange-street; and 70 feet in width, over all, from that street to Ducie-place. The question whether the semi-circular front next Market-street is or is not to be lined with shops, is not yet decided; but we believe that the Committee have come to the determination that the front shall be altered. Supposing shops to be constructed, the area of the room will then be 1,440 square yards; but if there should be no shops, then its dimensions will be 1,620 square yards. Including the portico and vestibule next Bank-street, which, on market days, will, doubtless, be crowded with subscribers, the total area available to the subscribers will not be less than 1,737 square yards—a superficial extent not possessed by any other exchange in the United Kingdom. The room will be 164 feet in length and 92 feet in breadth, across the widest part. Irrespective of the old semi-circular part, the new room will be divided longitudinally by two light colonnades into three aisles; the order adopted for these colonnades is Ionic, from the example of the temple of Erechtheus at Athens. The centre aisle is lighted by a central dome and two octagonal lanterns, one at each end; the two side aisles derive light from the large and lofty three-light windows in Exchange-street and Ducie-place. The interior height from the floor to the top of the centre dome is 60 feet; that of the side aisles, which have paneled ceilings, is 23 feet. Attention has been paid by the architect to secure a complete ventilation. This is effected by innumerable apertures in the ceilings, domes, and lanterns, to carry off the heated air by means of shafts, &c., to the top of the building; while fresh air is to be introduced through ornamental openings in the columns, &c. Double doors, and other air chambers, are provided, by means of which, and the stores in the basement story, it is expected that the whole building will be well warmed and ventilated.” Messrs. Howdes and Edwards are the contractors.